FORUM

OCTOBER, 1903

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An Outline of the Secret Doctrine:

COSMOGENESIS.

A series of articles with this title was published twelve years ago in LUCIFER, an attempt being made to follow the Stanzas, and to make clear the metaphysical and scientific principles involved in the teaching of the Building of the Worlds.

Repeated requests have been made to the Editor of the THEOSOPHICAL FORUM to reprint these articles, but it may be more advisable to issue them in book form, uniform with ANCIENT AND MODERN PHYSICS. Readers who approve of this suggestion are invited to send an expression of their views to

CHARLES JOHNSTON,

FLUSHING, NEW YORK.

"A New Pamphlet on Karma."

A copy of this pamphlet will be sent gratis to any reader of the Forum who will send his name and address on a postcard to the publisher. Thomas Green, 10 Park Road Mansions, Wandsworth Common, London, S. W. For Propaganda purposes copies will be supplied at 3 cents each plus postage at the rate of 16 cents per dozen. Payment may be made in postage stamps.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL

FORUM

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ENDURANCE.

No one who has lived among Mahommedan races can have failed to be impressed by the manner and degree to which their religion enters into the daily life of the people. All the most common acts are with them matters of religious ceremonial, so that there is not an hour of the day in which the teachings of their faith are not brought to their consciousness. The contrast between this religious fervor and absorbtion and the neglect and aloofness with which all such matters are treated in christian countries cannot escape the attention of the most unobservant traveller; while the causes from which it springs form a most interesting study, as well to the student of comparative religion as to the psychologist. For on the one hand we find a religion almost materialistic in its doctrines rigidly adhered to and close to the outer life of its people, while on the other we see a teaching of such spiritual mysticism that its practices are neglected, and its very ideals abandoned as unattainable and impracticable by those who outwardly profess them.

Mahommed appears in history as a great law-giver rather than as a prophet; as one who knew his people and recognized their limitations and whose subtle wisdom moulded his teachings to their

capacities as well as to their needs. Of all the great religions his is the most exoteric; the virtues it inculcates are those of the outer man: pride, courage, honesty, and unwavering faith. Such ideals lie close to the hearts of all men, and he who follows them claims both his own respect and that of his fellows.

The teachings of Jesus, on the other hand, are, before all else, those of the mystic; that to which he speaks is the Inner Man; the laws he gave, those of the Inner Life. Until some measure of the Inner Life is known and experienced these laws are not only unintelligable, but in direct contrast to the accepted standards of our civilization. So that the christian peoples present the unique spectacle of professing, once a week, a certain act of virtues, which in their hearts they neither admire nor respect, because they do not understand.

Something of gentleness and love we have indeed grown into —we at least reverence them—but endurance, meekness and submission are utterly foreign to our ideals. We find them weak and colourless qualities,—desired perhaps for our women,—but in ourselves too close to cowardice and effeminateness to be viewed with anything but suspicion or contempt. We feel that in truth the kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by violence and that these are no arms for battle.

Yet once our inner eyes have opened, even for a moment, the falsity of this view is immediately apparent. We see how we have misunderstood these qualities and their application,—what gulfs separate their true warrior character from their previous effeminate appearances. Meekness and submission are seen as but the disciplining of our forces, endurance as the triumph of our will over fate.

For the combat of each of us is with his fate or Karma, our forces are the primeval forces now playing in our passions and desires, they and all our lower nature must be meek and submissive to the awakened inner will. We are not told to be meek and submissive to others, but to our own souls, to the eternal spiritual Law, which is the expression of our own Inner Wills, as our Souls are one with the Over Soul. These qualities are thus very positive acts of will, as positive and requiring as much courage as the obedience of a soldier on the battle-field. They differ from the

accepted counterfeits that bear their names, as this obedience differs from surrender.

If this be true of meekness and submission, far more is it true of endurance. For the value and virtue of endurance lies precisely where it differs from our previous notions of meekness and submission. Where a virtue at all it is a haughty warrior virtue; positive, fiery and quickening; always a triumph, a proof that we are stronger than the fate that descends upon us.

The conquest of our Karma by endurance is in reality a very simple fact of physics: the law that a constant force, no matter how small, continually acting, will in time overcome the effects of any initial impulse, no matter how powerful. It is illustrated in the flight of every projectile, the fall of every stone.

Our fate, our Karma, or our outward circumstances are one and all the consequences of past acts. To this initial momentum we oppose the ceaseless pressure of our wills. Steadily, unwaveringly and unremittingly we endure the shock of impact, the rush and swirl of our accumulated past; so enduring, we outwear and outlive it. Such endurance is the triumphant assertion of immortality, that we are of the eternal and shall outlive all that fate may send. For outward circumstances pass and change, but the will of the Inner Man endures forever.

In the Metropolitan Museum there used to be a small circular room around the walls of which were placed casts of the colossal sitting statues of the kings of ancient Egypt. Differing in feature, even in racial characteristic, those there imaged are felt to be alike in this: that each could sit immovable through all eternity with that same calm, fixed gaze and soul superior to fate. For them failure is not, joy and pain are alike indifferent, they themselves *are,* and through them and around them is immortal life and will, with unwavering purpose, they bide their time unconquerable.

Such is the endurance of the freeman, differing from the endurance of the slave as day from night. For whether an act of will or an act of necessity, whether a burden which we choose to bear to attain our own ends, or one from which we cannot escape, endurance implies a burden which we *bear,* not one under which we sink.

Most pityful is it to see those who, seeking to enter the inner

life, have not understood this teaching. Bowed by the fate they have called upon themselves, confounding suffering with endurance, they sink beneath their burdens and steep themselves in sorrow, thinking they endure. So dull and lethargic they become, so weak and negative that they suffer from mere habit that which an act of will would free them from; till at last they endure the "tears in the eyes of their Soul" with the same spiritless passivity. Far better to break out into open rebellion where submission is required, than to so suffer the slow, shameful death of negation.

He who falters in purpose because of his burdens, fails in endurance and is a slave to fate. He who is perfect in endurance if completely free. For neither joy nor pain nor any buffeting of fortune can turn him from his course. Step by step as he advances he sees the burdens of necessity turned into burdens born of his own will, and so, through endurance, he bears and outlives them.

For man outlasts the ages. His will is coextensive with the Universal Will, his Soul with the Divine, his heritage the mastery of fate. He has but persistently to claim his own, to have it granted him; and it is through the warrior virtues taught in the gentle mysticism of Christ, as by the occultists of all times and races, that this claim is made, this mastery accomplished.

AN OUTLINE OF THE "SECRET DOCTRINE."

[In these papers an attempt will be made to give a clear account of the theory of life and development contained in Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, based on stanzas from the Book of Dzyan. As it is impossible within the limits to which we are restricted to bring forward all the arguments in support of these theories, and as no partial statement would be adequate, no attempt at argument will be made. Readers who may be inclined to accuse us of too dogmatic assertion of unproven facts, of "handling worlds and pebbles too freely," will kindly remember that this is simply the outline of a doctrine the proofs of which they must seek for in the doctrine itself. As these papers may subsequently be reprinted, any criticism or discussion of them will be very welcome.]

I.

Summary.

Universal Night. The absorption of the Universe into latency; in its scientific, philosophical, and religious aspects; the Trinity in Unity. The Absolute.

The *Secret Doctrine* begins by contemplating the Universe as withdrawn from its condition of manifestation into the latent state in which it sleeps during the recurring periods of Universal Night, when time is absorbed in eternal duration.

For us, time is registered by the motions of the sun and stars; by the earth's rotation, marking out the day from sunrise to sunrise; by the waxing and waning of the moon; by the earth's journey around the sun; and by that greater year that the pole traces out among the constellations in the slow Precession of the Equinoxes.

But when, at the evening of each universal day, the earth and the moon have faded to pale shadows, and with the sun and planets, one by one have melted back into the common source from which they sprung; when all the stars, the clocks of the universe, have become invisible, then time, as we know it, ceases, and vanishes into the bosom of eternal duration.

Even in the world of manifestation, Time has an uncertain, erratic life. In the waking world, minute drags after minute, with the stiff rigidity of dense matter; solid forms remain unchanged, or imperceptibly unchanged, for hours or ages.

In the world of dreams—as real to itself as the world of day

—minutes and hours have more fluidity; image succeeds image, melting, coalescing, transforming, with a rapidity that would be startling in waking life, but seems quite natural in the dream-world, where an hour of day may be an age of dream.

In those clearer worlds to which spiritual vision penetrates, long vistas of being are concentrated into a moment; past and future draw nearer each other, and a "thousand years are as one day." In the highest world of all, where vision becomes divine, all the lives of all beings are perpetually visible; for the transformations of time have no existence there, and the infinite past and the infinite future have become blended in the Eternal Now.

When the Universe from manifestation in objective life has sunk back gradually through all the planes of being into this highest divine world, then the time that we know is at an end, vanished and absorbed into eternal duration.

When the worlds have thus faded away in each evening of the universe, and the boundless realms of space, from the lowest material plane, through the planes of dream and vision and spiritual sight, to the threshold of the highest divine world, are left without visible inhabitant, either man, angel, or demigod; then, in the decrepitude of time, space too becomes transformed; there is no longer height, nor breadth, nor depth, for there is no longer anything to measure by these attributes; then Space is transformed into Being, independent of the dimensions of space.

Where are all the inhabitants of Space, from the lowest world to the highest, from the human and sub-human to the angel and demigod? Where are the manifold worlds in which they lived and moved and had their being?

To answer this we must ask, what are these worlds, and in what consists the life lived in them by man, and angel, and demigod.

Looked at from one point of view this life, whether of man, angel, or demigod, and these worlds in which they live, consist of an endless series of pictures and images, whether appearing outwardly through the senses, or inwardly in the mind; passing unceasingly before the Consciousness, which takes note of image after image, and picture after picture, observing all as a "disinterested spectator."

Between these two, Consciousness, the disinterested spectator,

and the incessant world of sensations, of images and imaginings that pass before it, a great gulf is fixed; Consciousness remains unchanged on the one side, and the infinite picture-world unfolds itself unceasingly on the other. In this panoramic world of images, space adheres as an attribute, and time adheres as an attribute; space refers to the extent of the image, and the portion of the whole panoramic world it fills; and time refers to the durability of each image or impression, as compared with other images more fleeting or more sustained. Time and Space therefore, as being but a part of the panorama, the unceasing picture-world that passes before Consciousness the disinterested spectator, cannot logically be attributed to the Consciousness which observes them as external to, and different from itself.

This is expressed by saying that Consciousness is eternal, that is, quite independent of and outside time; and also independent of and outside the dimensions of space; or in the words of the *Upanishad,* Consciousness is the Ancient "smaller than small and greater than great."

Thus, from this point of view, we are led to divide the Universe into two entirely different though related powers, on the one side Consciousness-eternal and free from the bonds of time and space, and on the other the endless panorama of pictures, images and perceptions, appearing either outwardly through the senses, or inwardly through the mind; between these two, Consciousness, and the objects of Consciousness, a great gulf is fixed, which is bridged over by the magician Perception.

Before the disinterested spectator, Consciousness, stretches a veil or film of images and sensations more permanent and more closely adhering to Consciousness, than the vast mass of pictures and images that pass by, in the endless panorama of the worlds; through this veil or film the other images and pictures are seen, and from it they receive a more or less permanent colouring and temper. This veil that adheres to Consciousness is the personality: the bundle of feelings, thoughts and desires that make up the personal life.

And though Consciousness is a disinterested spectator, this adherent film of personality is, on the contrary, intensely interested in the panorama of pictures that pass before it, and receives from them, or attributes to them, alternate sensations of pleasure and

pain, heat and cold, bitter and sweet, longing and satiety, love and hate—the "pairs of opposites" which make up the sum of the feelings and sensations that fill the life of the personality.

This condition of things, the Consciousness as disinterested spectator of the ceaseless panorama of pictures, with the personality as a veil between, is repeated on all the planes. But as life rises from the lower and more material to the higher and spiritual planes, changes appear. The veil of personality becomes gradually more luminous and lucent, till at last it stretches as a hardly visible, transparent film between consciousness and image, and—no longer subject to the "pair of opposites," pleasure and pain, love and hate, longing and satiety, but rather receptive of the single essences of which love and hate, pleasure and pain, heat and cold, are but the positive and negative poles—the purified and cleansed personality begins to partake of spiritual and divine nature.

Along with this ennobling of the personality, a change passes over the panorama of life on the higher planes or ranges of being. What had seemed on the lowest ranges to be a mere chaotic hurtling of images, an erratic lawless passage of sensations, with no order or relation to the Consciousness to which they were presented, is seen on the higher ranges of life, to be an orderly procession, a steady progress full of disciplinary, educational value.

And on the divine plane, it becomes apparent that the power that marshals and compels these images, these elements of discipline and development, is not foreign or isolated from Consciousness, but is rather the eternal Will wedded to Consciousness, the expression of that Self of which Will and Consciousness are the eternal twin powers. These will-directed elements of discipline which on the lower planes are apparently chaotic and at random, on the higher planes draw closer and closer to the Consciousness, and on the highest divine plane they are seen as not foreign to Consciousness, but partaking of its nature, and subject and object become united in one divinity which is neither of them, and is yet both of them.

When throughout all the worlds the "pairs of opposites," pleasure and pain, love and hate, longing and satiety, have, after the interval of ages of manifested life, become gradually drawn together, and have coalesced into those single essences of which they are but the negative and positive poles; when throughout all the

worlds the images and pictures, the elements of discipline—in which the spiritual Will, the twin-brother of pure Consciousness, expresses itself—have gradually drawn closer and closer to Consciousness, the film between them growing ever purer and more pellucid; and when at last throughout all the worlds the twin-brothers Consciousness and Spiritual Will (in which all manifestation has been absorbed) become once more one, then begins that true life which is veiled under the name of Universal Night.

This re-union of the "pairs of opposites," their slow re-absorption into spiritual Will, the divine parent of all manifestation, and the re-union of Will and Consciousness, with the disappearance of all life as we know it—in reality the beginning of true life—this is the second element (or the second, metaphysical aspect) of the mystery that is called the Nights of the Universe.

There is yet a third side to this subject. Linked with Consciousness on every plane and range of being is a sense of moral life, an aspiration to, and dim perception of, higher and diviner life above, and a sense of relation with and obligation to the cognate lives around us.

On the lower range of being these two moral perceptions are dim and clouded.

As life rises higher and higher, entering deeper and deeper into the divine power that was first only dimly felt above, side by side with this upward growth is an outward growth by which the boundaries, which had at first seemed hard and impassible, between us and the cognate souls around us, begin to soften and melt away; and at last on the great day, when we become one with the divine soul above us, we have also by the same growth become one with the cognate souls beside us; and, though still knowing our own existence in the divine, we are no longer conscious of any distance between our own souls and the souls of our fellow-men—then no longer men, but divine beings, at one with us, and at one with the divine.

(To be Continued.)

LEO AND SERAPHIM.

(Continued.)

All saints end by acquiring the warmest compassion and the most passionate love of humanity. Like Buddha, they all preach charity, forgiveness, attention towards the unhappy and an eternal Father, who is calling men to the service of life. They teach peace, harmony, repentance, gentleness and the happiness of love. They speak of many beautiful things which we understand to be beautiful the moment we hear them speak, and the wonder is that we believe them without questioning. Apparently, the hypocrits speak the same words, century after century, but in their mouths great words grow small and their fire disappears. It is a great gift to impart faith. And its secret is having faith. The great achievement of righteousness is such a complete development of faith, that its influence on others becomes altogether irresistible. But only holiness can make holy.

The great part saints play in history they owe to their faculty of making the people holy, and their welfare noble. You will certainly agree that there is no greater happiness than being with good people. You do not know whether you ever met living saints, but most probably you did, because there certainly were people, who filled you with an indescribable joy by their mere presence, or by a few words they spoke, even though you disagreed with these words. You are charmed by the superiority of true worth just in the same measure as you are offended by the pretensions of mediocrity. You know that somebody truly superior is before you and it is enough to make you happy in the best way. A well-known author said to me about another of a much greater fame: "Bidding him good bye I always feel as if I had taken a moral bath." And so it is. It is easy to understand why the masses place the saints above terrestrial authorities. For they represent the one true aristocracy the masses can understand. Peasants have not heard about the "Velvet Book" of aristocratic precedence, but they all honor the lives of saints and know well such signs of heraldry as the sword, the crucifixion, the stake and the gallows.

In times when aristocracy was a living reality, the masses were fortunate, for they had grounds to believe in the "best people."

Possibly, this faith was blind, possibly it was mistaken, but even a mistaken faith into something superior elevates the spirit. The aristocracy of the past always was to be blamed, when it lost the respect of the masses.....And as if having despaired of creating a class of irreproachable lay people, nations have gone to their saints, with all their heart. The masses honor defunct saints, as if moved by the belief that that which is truly alive must be deathless. In this sense the dry bones of a dead holy man *are* life-giving. And the mere thought of it is salutory.

Do people need an aristocracy? Yes, people need an aristocracy of this true kind, they need it, for it is the highest institution in the state, though neither appointed, nor supported by the state. In the great human crowd, where sensitive personalities of separate men are cramped and distorted by the rude pressure of the whole, one needs before one's eyes the living example of undistorted spirit, living a free and natural life. Knowing no limitations, no obligation except the self-imposed interior kind—such a condition is truly more than kingly.....A king is limited by international pressures, by conditions of economy and by national characteristics. For a holy man it is different: his one care is to rule over one single man,—himself.

They say that in Buddhist lands a monk is looked upon as a superior being, and a king, when out riding, is to dismount on meeting a monk. And in truth, is there anything more majestic than the image of a man, who has renounced everything in order to become godlike? Godlike,—that is free from all limitations, ruling over everything, all emracing in the spiritual sense, conscious in all regions of life and of an unshaking stability. Long before the final achievement, the mere attempt, the mere longing to reach this state is a brand of nobility.

It is not in vain that men honor the great in their midst. The great are necessary as the organ of social regeneration, as the perfect shape into the likeness of which may be moulded every individual soul, in the measure of personal and racial efforts. Distorted as your own nature can be, the contemplation of a more beautiful nature will straighten it out, though be it only for a while and in a small degree. Neither our body, nor our soul, have reached their final expression. Our true "self" does not live in reality, but in

the ideal. Life is the unconscious motion towards this ideal, and, like a working artist, the creative principle needs a model. If we have before our eyes a being, who is of a kin to us, yet superior to us, our own regeneration will progress more speedily.

Nietsche's idea of the "übermensch" is not new; the "laughing lion" representing this superior being is not new either. The lion has become a heraldic symbol in the armors of noble knights and of states, long before Nietsche. But side by side with it another ideal has lived in the human soul since the remotest antiquity: the ideal of a seraphic being, whose dream is the perfectioning of spirit. Every epoch creates an aristocracy of its own, most probably in accordance with a mysterious law of necessity we do not understand. One epoch develops knighthood, another monasticity, yet another philosophy, or poetry, or science. Sometimes these aristocracies live side by side interpenetrating each other with their elements. Being noble organs of human social life, they develop separate virtues, like courage, compassion, good taste, knowledge. The general debility of European society has lowered these ancient aristocracies, but their principle still lives. The new folds of society may be altogether democratic, yet, there can be no doubt, society will yield new organs of nobility, a new knighthood, a new monasticity, and a new wisdom. You may object: what is the use of knighthood in our days when war is morally condemned, when the truly Christian consciousness condemns all violence? What is the use of monkhood now, when everyone has thousands of open ways to serve humanity? My answer will be: Chivalry and monasticity, philosophy and poetry are eternal phenomena. They always are needed, now as in the remotest antiquity. Let physical war disappear, but moral struggle will never end, must never end. The latter demands the same courage *"sans peur et sans reproche,"* as in the days of knighthood. You can not possibly think that it is easy for a man with a free soul to stand for his conscience against the crowd. You can not possibly think, that that, which is called family, class, party, coterie, corporation and state, does not create a pressure, which is all powerful in its fatal influence on timid souls. Power is a great thing, but our day does not need power, but courage.

Monasticity either can not die. The glorious bloom of our

civilization is extremely like the luxurious centuries, which gave birth to monasticity. Weary of the facticious creativeness of man, tired of conventionalities and falsehoods, men with sensitive souls, like St. John of Damascus and St. Francis of Assizi, renounced the world. They do the same in our days, though without announcing the fact in the newspapers. They seek monasteries, or some secluded spot in the midst of nature, or simply the quiet of some out of the way country homestead.

A man feels that his heart is broken. He wants to make it whole. He wants to become a child once more, he wants to forget everything and live once more the joys of direct and spontaneous ignorance. This is the beginning—the end is holiness.

A knight, a poet, a monk and a wise man—in essence all these are members of the same heroic race. They are sent to us not that they should produce things, but that they should produce true men in their own persons. They are necessary because they are able to keep up humanity's standards of nobility and godliness..... Usually sterile in the physical sense, knights, recluses, poets and wise men represent new shoots of the human race: they are the source of the freshness and the health of spirit.

The lonely Buddha was the mustard seed of a new kingdom of souls. He was the progenitor of numberless cheerful moods, exhaulted aspirations, sublime efforts, tender sympathies, repentances and joys. Our life would get impoverished into a complete bankruptcy if it was suddenly deprived of all the sublime things, which hero epics, poetry and the lives of saints impart into it. The world is only as beautiful as we make it: the good and the evil the soul sees is the soul's own. But this "soul's own" is accumulated only through the suggestions of humanity as a whole: and blessed is he, who gathers in himself, like the bee, only that which is sweet and aromatic. Yet there are flies, who look like bees, but shun flowers, alighting but on carrion. They are certain to bring ruin to everything living.

The worship of the godlike man is the only natural religion of man.....There is nothing more ignoble than ingratitude, and indifference towards another man's greatness is a sign of a vulgar soul. But the worship of a holy man must also be holy. Being an act of uniting us to the pure sipirt it demands purity, which is nat-

ural to it. We must worship him not by words and bows alone, but by making his memory a living thing in our hearts, by clearly realizing the law of his life. The holy man is dead, but it depends on ourselves to light his hidden torch once more by lighting it within ourselves. You may object: would it not be an impertinent presumption on our part to think that through our sincere admiration for a holy man we can become holy ourselves? To me, it is no presumption at all. For otherwise what use could another man's holiness have for us? Coming in touch with the spiritual body of the saint, you become holy yourself, though may be but for a short while. During moments of ecstatic worship, you undoubtedly become purer, loftier and more compassionate.

What is all this if not holiness?

Repeat these rare moments as often as you can, make a habit of them, and in time you also will become holy. We must not think that holiness is a kind of a privilege, like an inherited title. God's arms are opened for everyone. All can be received into the kingdom of truth, all who really wish for it. Even the temporary, weakly effort of will in this direction can not be lost without traces. To have lived some truly human moments, even if they were few, is a great blessing. They are remembered like events, and the very memory of some holy moods of your soul shines like a lamp on the grave of a saint.

Whilst I am writing these lines, hundreds of thousands of people hurry to behold the bones of St. Seraphim. The miracle is not that these remains were spared by decay. The true miracle was all his life, super-natural in its loftiness of spirit and its moral radiance. The miracle is that this life proved to be salutory not for the saint alone, but for all the untold suffering hearts, who sought his help. The miracle is that, having died, the saint did not disappear, that the mere thought of him, his mere image, continued to relieve the suffering and to cure the sick.

People who are narrow and superstitious are forever clothing everything into the likeness of sorcery, introducing their own darkness into the regions of light.....Christ healed the sick and invested the apostles with this gift. The gift of healing belongs to everything that inspires faith, freeing life's energy, which was tied by sickness. But Christ and his apostles did not come to cure the

body. Their mission was to heal souls, to save something superior to the body, something prior to the body. According to a very ancient belief, which is shared by modern scientists, the origin of our bodies is spirit. There exists an unconceivable principle, around which matter is wound like the cocoon around the catterpilar. All physical sickness came from some irregularity in the activity of this principle. So long as it flows untramelled out of the secret chambers of nature, all physical ills can be healed, all contagions can be paralyzed. A healthy soul warns its body and defends it, but the moment its relation with God gets unsteady, the moment it grows weary, darkened or weak, destructive powers will rush into the body, as the enemy rushes into a badly defended fortress. To bring the soul back into divine purity, to give it back its pristine energy, intelligence and beauty, was the true object of Christ's coming, of the work of the apostles and of the suffering of martyrs.

The mission of saints in our days is still the same: the restoration of the soul and through it the regeneration of the body. Who can tell what wonderful interior upheaval takes place in the patient at the very hope of getting cured. Hope presupposes faith, it also presupposes love towards the saint. This momentary uprising towards perfection above all must refresh the soul of the patient. And so the sluices will be raised for the flow of the healing powers, which are forever present at the very foundation of life.

Whatever the secret of this restorative power, it is precious for humanity. For the very root of the soul gets revived near it. As I pointed out at the beginning of my article, it is not the tiara of Leo the strong, but the bones of Seraphim the humble, through which life can be restored.

AMONGST MAGAZINES.

There is an approach towards acceptance of some of the tenets of Theosophy in a brief survey of the "swing of the pendulum"—as he calls it, instead of cyclic recurrence—from the negation of science on the one side to psychologism on the other, which is the thesis of Mr. W. D. Howell's Easy Chair discourse in *Harper's Monthly* for June. This is interesting, not only because of Mr. Howell's disposition to accept some occult mysteries, as evinced by his embodying them in his earlier and more recent stories, but as an eminent literateur's testimony to the manifest trend in this direction of the current literature of the world—scientific, philosophic and romantic. Moreover, this notable reverse swing of the pendulum, related by him to very recent years—a synchronism felt by Theosophists—and "coming," as he says, "no one knows whence," is in a way an answer to those who cavil at the existence of a Brotherhood devoted to the uplifting of the race, and who query, If such there be, why do they not come out from their seclusion and work among men as well as for them? Is not their influence, working in the hearts and minds of men, and leading them to turn to these mysteries, as Mr. Howell asserts, "with a zest scarcely known before in the history of man," a hundredfold more potent than personal contact, necessarily isolated to a few individuals, even though it were practicable? When a prominent scientist of the present day asserts that the psychic is as real as the physical, and an eminent student of life questions "how much or how little of the universe is subjective," is it not apparent that the world is being affected by such influence?

Mr. Howells is more than a writer of stories; he is what all successful romanticists must be, a student of nature and life and books. He is an analyzer of human character, an observer of men's impulses and motives, and a graceful, competent and honest critic of their thought and work; and he is, withal, like others of open mind, susceptible to the influence of the increasing purpose through which the "thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns." Therefore his opinions and observations are of value from a philosophical, and in a measure from a scientific, as well as from a literary, point of view. He, in company with Professor Shaler

and others who meditate, has evidently attained to a glimpse of his inner self, but without being quite well aware of how or why he has reached the result, and is less sure of just what it is he has discovered. It will be remembered that Prof. Shaler is unable to determine just what meditation has revealed to him, and can only approach to an accounting of the marvel by the involved conception that it must be "inherited thought"—inherited from his millions of ancestors. How much more intelligible it would be to suppose that it is a heritage from himself, for as Mr. Howells phrases it, "We cannot suppose we are underived or undestined; that is not thinkable."

Mr. Howells exemplifies his trust in the inner consciousness in feeling it a loss that Mr. John Bigelow in his recently republished "Philosophy of Sleep" was not content to rest his conjectures and theories upon spiritual intuitions, but sought to bolster and support them with documentary evidence. Of the value of inspirational evidence in this connection, he says:—"Our only grief with Mr. Bigelow's book is that he does not leave us to its conjectures, to its suggestions of all human experience in the occult, but offers us documents in support of it. What we rather ask of our author than his instances, his dreams of Agassiz, or Cicero, or Scepia, is the report of some such augustly solemn and authoritative passage as 'In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction.' * * * What Mr. Bigelow's inquiry suggests is that in certain moments of rapture, in that ecstacy of consciousness when consciousness seems to cease, we have intimations of supernal things in waking, which are the property of our habitual experience in dreaming. We recover from these intimations with a start, and are what we call ourselves again. * * * Yet there is an effect of authority in these intimations, which does not suffer us to continue their messages, if we may give a name so positive to the ethereal communication which they seem to open between our inner and outer selves. * * * All psychology, which disclaims its putative relation to the soul ("such limitation is regretable") is alive with fresh interest for those who seek to know it through the mind, and a whole order of literature has arisen, calling itself psychological as realism called itself scientific, and

dealing with life on its mystical side. * * * It is not necessary, as it is not possible, to discover the origin of the present condition, but that it is an actual condition no one can doubt who looks at any current magazine, and notes the psychologic coloring of the dramatic thinking in it. We have indeed in our best fiction gone back to mysticism, if indeed we were not always there in our best fiction. * * * So far from being taught by the new inspiration, coming no one knows whence, the old doctrine of denial, we are somehow authorized or encouraged, each in the belief that—

> 'Something is, or something seems,
> That touches me with mystic gleams,
> Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—
> Of something felt, like something here;
> Of something done, I know not where;
> Such as no language may declare.' "

Referring to "The Story of My Life," by Helen Keller, Mr. Howells says: As one reads, the mystical purport of the saying, "The Kingdom of God is within you," avouches itself in a new significance, or at least new suggestion. * * * On its surface the story of this life is that of a being as rarely gifted as hopelessly bereft, surmounting every disadvantage and arriving at a fullness of consciousness, a passionate interest in the universal frame of things, known to the very few; but below the surface, it is rich in intimations, yet dearer to the race than any hints toward the perfectioning of existence here. We seem to know the outer world from the world within us. Somehow there, in the dim inmost of life, seems the test of material things; and the question which will oftenest recur to some readers of Hellen Keller's wonderful story is how much of the inaudible and invisible world around her was guessed by her exquisite nerves from the conscious intuitions and unconscious moods of her devoted friend, and how much has been revealed from the sources which again we are beginning to interrogate with renewed courage, if not with renewed hope."

Reviewing Mr. F. W. H. Myers' "Human Personality and its Survival at Bodily Death" in the *July Atlantic,* Mr. John E. Russell writes:—"Recent psychology is making us familiar with a conception of the soul quite different from that idea of the human Ego we have for the most part entertained. We are compelled to

recognize that each man is potentially at least more and other than in his customary consciousness he takes himself to be; that what goes on in his every-day consciousness and above the threshold of it, so to speak, is not all that can, and under certain conditions, does go on within his individuality; and further that the subliminal or submerged portion of out psychical life is in the case of some persons richer in content, better organized, wiser and safer than the supra-liminal portion. It is no longer possible to regard the human soul as a single, simple, unchanging substance; we are rather multiplex in the structure of our Egos; there exists more than our psychic personality in the life history of the same human individual. Psychologists have known these facts for a considerable time. * * * It is here that Myers strikes out a new path, ventures a new hypothesis: viz., That which we call the self of every-day experience is in reality only a portion of a larger personality which is our true and larger self; the self of our customary consciousness is that part of our larger self which the conditions of our terrene existence have made possible. * * * The other part of our total self exists and functions as a subliminal consciousness, at times manifesting itself in the supra-liminal field, as in the inspired achievements of genius; and, in the case of some individuals, this submerged self invades and takes temporary possession of the supra-liminal region, as in medium and in alternating or secondary personalities. The true self, the human soul, did not begin to exist with the life of the body; it will not cease with the cessation of that life. The human soul does not depend for its existence on the body, but only for its manifestations, the transmission of its thoughts to other souls. * * * This hypothesis * * * affords strong indications that the author is on the right track and will ultimately be followed by those who most strenuously reject his theory. * * * By this hypothesis is explained such psychic phenomena as hypnotism, telepathy, phantasms of the living and of the dead, and alleged communications from such persons to the living. * * * The marvels of hypnotism are the 'fragmentary expression of that more comprehensive intelligence, of a power which the supra-liminal self does not possess.' * * * To take another instance; experiments have established as a fact the communication by our mind of thoughts to another mind without the medium of any known sensory or physical

channels; our person has been able to make himself appear to another person at a distance, in the entire absence of his bodily presentation. Accept the author's hypothesis and these facts are readily explained and fall into line with the facts of genius—hypnotism and other allied phenomena:—the hypothesis fits them all. * * * More remarkable still,—the death of the body does not seem to break this chain of evidential facts; the ghost, rightly understood, presents no essential difference, no wide departure from the phenomena of telepathy and phantasms of the living. * * * The reader will not find it easy to reject the author's contention, that the evidence which tends to establish the continued life of the human personality after the death of the body is continuous with the evidence that establishes the fact that a human personality here on the earth can communicate his thoughts and manifest himself to other persons without the medium of the body."

The acceptance by all classes of students of psychology of the fact that there is something in the make-up of man which is demonstrably separate and distinct from the physical body and brain, and which, thinking and acting of itself is not necessarily dependent upon the material organism for its existence, but only dependent upon it in a measure for its means of manifestation on this plane, is a long stride in the direction of the absolute demonstration of life after death, if not of an immortal existence, and ought to be of immeasurable satisfaction to those who are unable to accept the story of the Resurrection of Christ as indubitable proof that man's life does not terminate at the grave.

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